You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas.

Extraordinary people are ordinary people with extraordinary determination

Bring Forth Your Tithes, Your Gifts and Your Offerings.

You better set yourself free

ZAMI: Atlanta's Premiere Organization for Lesbians of African Descent

13th Annual Scholarship Brunch

Saturday, September 27, 2008
11:00 A.M.
Bellissima Lounge

Without health, there is no wealth

Surviving is important. Thriving is elegant

Liberation includes freedom to make mistakes, Trust is built on authenticity and truth, Peace is delivered by transforming conflict, and Love that's genuine embraces both joy and pain

Faith is my courage, my hope, my reason, my future.

The only thing I have control over is me. I can't control or change others. The change begins with me and how I choose to see things

ZAMI Honors

Shirley Adams works with and volunteers for organizations that sustain our community and build alliances. She is working now on a collaborative project to nourish and strengthen ALHI and Fourth Tuesday of Georgia. Her passions are connecting with others – on and off of the dance floor. She is passionate about taking control of one's own physical and emotional health. Shirley has supported ZAMI scholarships for many years. She believes that education enriches life and expands one's vision of what is possible.

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From her "Sister of Sappho" days at Humbolt State University in the early 1970's to working with "Unity Fellowship Church" in Los Angeles, **Frances Andrews** ended the 70's as a member of the Peace Corps "gamins." She then spent the next ten years hibernating on Catalina Island while creating a nonprofit arts exchange for youth. After raising her daughter, Andrews made her way to Atlanta in 2002 where she works as a Literacy Facilitator for the Dekalb County Library and serves as a liaison in the homeless shelter community. A fierce believer in social justice, advocacy and volunteerism, she consistently marks her calendar throughout the year to just show up for duty. Andrews says, "I know how to "get in where I fit in."

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Born and raised in Atlanta, **Anne "Sarge" Barr** is the Commissioner of the Decatur Women's Sports League. She coached seven years for Hotlanta Softball and then began her own league offering additional sports such as tennis, bowling, basketball, volleyball and badminton. All women are encouraged to participate regardless of age, skill, and sexual orientation. The proceeds benefit the Atlanta Lesbian Health Initiative to assist women with inadequate health coverage. For the last six years, Barr has earned her living as a driver delivering meals for Project Open Hand: a community-based nonprofit organization addressing Comprehensive Nutrition Care™– healthy, home-delivered meals combined with nutrition education, counseling and therapy for homebound seniors and individuals struggling with a chronic, critical or terminal illness.

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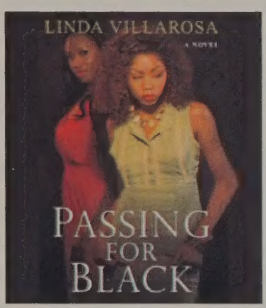
Special Guests

Linda Villarosa is a freelance writer and editor. Formerly, she edited the health pages for the *New York Times*, where she redesigned and expanded health coverage for *Science Times* and for the newspaper at large. Linda was also the executive editor of *Essence Magazine*, where she wrote or edited a number of award-winning articles. As a reporter, Linda has written dozens of articles for the *Times*, several of which ran on the newspaper's front page. She has also contributed articles, profiles and reviews to a number of national publications, including *Health*, *Latina*, the*New York Times Book Review*, *O Magazine*, *Vibe* and *Woman's Day*. Linda has won awards from several organizations, specifically The American Medical Writers' Association, The Arthur Ashe Institute, Lincoln University, the New York Association of Black Journalists, the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists' Association.

Linda is the author of the book *Body & Soul: The Black Women's Guide to Physical Health and Emotional Well-Being*. A Blackboard Bestseller, there are more than 200,000 copies in print. She is the coauthor of both *Finding Our Way: The Teen Girls' Survival Guide* and *The Black Parenting Book*. She also works behind the scenes to help other authors complete proposals and package and write their books. Her first novel, *Passing for Black*, was published in 2008. A graduate of the University of Colorado, Linda also spent a year at Harvard University as a journalism fellow. She lives in Brooklyn with her partner and two children.



Denitia Odigie was called "the find of the Fest" at the POP Montreal Festival, and she inspired one critic to say, "If you bemoan the lack of passion in singers today, you must see and hear this woman sing."

Just 24, Denitia has drawn inspiration from a veritable rainbow of influences. "In my formative years," she says, "I was learning the words to George Strait and Reba McEntire tunes and rocking out to all the nouveau grunge that was on the radio in the mid-90s. Now I live in Nashville, where this Americana/roots rock/alt-country thing is just in the air." The combination emerges in arresting lyrics and scintillating melodies that bring together otherwise disparate listeners. "Like a butterfly," said one reviewer, "she can be pegged to the page of a single genre and labeled as a certain kind of singer, but she's really most beautiful when you let her just fly free."

Denitia grew up outside Houston, in Baytown, Texas, exposed to the music of Al Green, Smokey Robinson and DC Talk, among many others. When she was 13, her mother bought her a $100 Stratocaster copy, and her musical journey began in earnest. Within a year, she was leading worship at church. A gifted student, she followed a scholarship to Nashville's Vanderbilt University, simultaneously earning a BA in Art History and becoming engrossed in the city's musical scene. She began performing in a local restaurant and took a songwriting course with a teacher who was, she says, "so encouraging. She was just very positive. And I think that somewhere in the back of my mind I started thinking, 'I really want to do this.'"

Special thanks & much gratitude to
Anna Ragghianti, Owner of Bellissima Lounge and
Co-Hosts Jillian Ford and Melissa Gordon

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ZAMI Honors Atlanta's Unsung Community Activists

Their bios and inspirational words to live by.

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Imani Evans is the Founder and Executive Director of Women Healing Women Atlanta, Inc., a nonprofit organization committed to supporting and empowering survivors of sexual violence (www.surviving2thriving.org). She holds a B.A in Psychology and M.A. in Counseling Psychology. Imani has been a social change agent for more than 18 years, working with several grassroots, nonprofit agencies throughout Atlanta, New Jersey and New York. Identifying as a poetess-warrior, Imani has hosted and performed for countless venues in New York and Atlanta. She considers her work an expression of self-empowerment and a celebration of ALL women!

Surviving is important. Thriving is elegant. – Maya Angelou

Deepali Gokhale (pronounced "go-clay") emigrated to the U.S. from India in 1973. Her childhood experiences growing up in a brown immigrant family in semi-rural Virginia shape much of her outlook on social justice. She has been an active volunteer and community organizer in queer and South Asian communities in Atlanta since 1995, as co-organizer of Raksha's Masala Chai Houses, Steering Committee Coordinator of Trikone Atlanta, Steering Committee Co-Chair of the campaign against Georgia's anti-gay marriage amendment, founder of the Queer Progressive Agenda, and Campaign Organizer for the Racial Justice Campaign Against "Operation Meth Merchant." After a period of rest and rejuvenation, Deepali is now helping to organize conversations between immigrant communities in Atlanta about using the human rights framework to advance their fight for justice. She is the recipient of the 2004 Human Rights Guardian Award from the National Center for Human Rights Education, the 2005 Ramesh and Vijaya Bakshi Community Change Award from Raksha, and the 2007 Award for Leadership in LGBTQ Community Organizing from KhushDC.

Liberation includes freedom to make mistakes, Trust is built on authenticity and truth, Peace is delivered by transforming conflict, and Love that's genuine embraces both joy and pain. – Deepali Gokhale

Roshelle Darlene Hudson worked for ten years with the Arkansas state health department in the area of AIDS prevention education and in 1990, founded and directed one of the first Black gay organizations in Arkansas, called Brotha's and Sista's. The organization addressed AIDS awareness and social change issues. Hudson moved from Arkansas to Georgia in1998 where she continued her community activism and AIDS work. In 2002-2006 she served as the Executive Director of In the Life Atlanta, an African American Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community-based project responsible for organizing Black gay pride and related forums in Atlanta. Her other work has included conducting HIV prevention education workshops in the southeast regions of the U.S. and abroad in indigent communities of South. She is a member of her union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), active in her neighborhood association, is a member of Zeta Phi Beta and attends the Vision Church. She has been in a committed relationship for nine years with a partner who also shares her passion for AIDS awareness work and community activism.

The only thing I have control over is me. I can't control or change others. The change begins with me and how I choose to see things. – Darlene Hudson

Rev. Dr. Kathi E. Martin is a community "bridge builder" who believes we are more powerful change agents when working together than when we are divided. She is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. Additionally, she is the former pastor of First Immanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church; founder of God, Self, and Neighbor (GSN) Ministries; and former Minister for Multi-Cultural Outreach at First Metropolitan Community Church. Dr. Martin presently serves at The Victory Church in Stone Mountain, Georgia and is a board member of the United Church of Christ Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns. A staunch activist in the LGBT community, Dr. Martin has lobbied on the federal and state level in support of the Hate Crimes Bill and the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), as well as against the Marriage Amendment. She is an active ally to the transgender community and has been the keynote speaker for the Atlanta Transgender Day of Remembrance. Dr. Martin has spoken at various local and national events including The National Coalition of Gay and Lesbian Concerns, In The Life Atlanta, and Miami Black Gay Pride.

Life can be found only in the present moment. The past is gone, the future is not yet here, and if we do not go back to ourselves in the present moment, we cannot be in touch with life. – Thich Nhat Hanh

Aida Rentas was born in Santurce, Puerto Rico and moved with her family to New York City when she was four years old. She learned early in life that to be a lesbian, one had to fight. She hung out in Greenwich Village and joined women's groups like Salsa Soul Sisters and the Activist in her was born. Rentas headed to Atlanta in 1992 and joined a myriad of organizations and assumed leadership roles in many of them. She was on the founding board of The Georgia Equality Project, founded a support group called Latinos En Accion, served as a senior advisor for Mayor Bill Campbell, as well as a volunteer coordinator for Mayor Shirley Franklin. She served on The Civilian Review Board, and was trained politically by The Victory Fund. Rentas worked as the Outreach Coordinator for the AIDS Memorial Quilt (The NAMES Project) from which she retired in 2006. For six years, she has directed the GrassRoots Institute, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to help single parents with their children. Rentas is currently overseeing the construction of its new headquarters on five acres of land in Tennessee…at a place called "Sassafras"

Extraordinary people are ordinary people with extraordinary determination. – Aida Rentas

Duncan E. Teague has been a lay minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta since 2004. He is currently pursuing a Masters of Divinity degree at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in hopes of becoming a fully fellowshipped Unitarian Universalist minister. Teague was a keynote presenter at the Gay Spirit Vision's 2007 Fall Conference, Highlands, NC and has served on organizing committees of the national Gay Spirit Culture Summit, Garrison, NY and the Southeastern Regional Gay Men's Health Summit, Fort Lauderdale, FL. He is a facilitator of the "Spirituality and HIV" workshop of AID Atlanta's AIDS 101 and has worked in HIV/AIDS prevention, education and/or research for more than twenty years. Teague, as the senior member of the ADODI Muse; A Gay Negro Ensemble, is a respected performing artist and published poet. The ADODI Muse have been gracing the stages nationally and locally with their out and proud performance poetry since 1995. Teague is happily married to his long-time companion of fifteen years, David Thurman

You better set yourself free. – Unknown

Brunch Schedule

11:30 – 12 noon	Performance by Denitia Odigie
12 noon –12:30	Tribute to Community Activists
12:30 – 1:45	Reading & Book Signing by Linda Villarosa – Books sold by Charis Books & More
1:45 – 2:00	Thanks and Acknowledgemants

2008 Audre Lorde Scholarship Award Recipients

Dawn Robinson, Berkeley City College, Berkeley, CA – Sheryl Burke Award

Kendra Bryant, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL – Brenda Banks & Kerrie Cotten Williams Award

Joshua Johnson, UC Berkeley School of Law, Berkeley, CA – Sandra Jones & Ronald Moore Award

David Green, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI – Tony Daniels Community Ally Award funded by ADODI Muse – A Gay Negro Ensemble (Duncan Teague, Anthony Antoine & Malik M.L. Williams)

Sylvie Victoire, International Institute for Water/Environmental Engineering, Burkina Faso, West Africa – Mary Anne Adams Award funded by Carol Harrison & Stephanie Troncalli

Leicque Doanes, Georgia Perimeter College, Atlanta, GA – ALFA Award (Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance)

Sarah Stefana Smith, Goddard College, Plainfield, VT – Margaret Helfand Memorial Award funded by Judith Helfand

Lewis Hamer, Harold Washington College, Chicago, Illinois – Cherie Caldwell Award

Yolo Akili, Yoga of India, Atlanta, GA -- Wendy Belkin & Linda Bryant Award

Loc Vu, West Valley College, Saratoga, CA –Sarah Crymes & Rhonda Freeman Award and Elder Antonio Jones Award (funded by Unity Fellowship Church).

Kristin M. Brown, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL – Margaret Ntombi Howell Power and Presence Memorial Award funded by Rhesa M. Jenkins & Ama Saran

Jardyn D. Lake, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA – Mandy Carter Award funded by Germaine Curtin

Tyaire Wilkerson, Barry University, Miami Shores, FL – Fourth Tuesday-ALHI (Atlanta Lesbian Health Initiative) Award

Unless otherwise noted, the 2008 awards are named after the person(s) who funded the scholarship.

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ZAMI, Inc. Board of Directors:

Miya Binta • Beryl Jackson • Aisha Dubose
Mary Anne Adams• Edith Biggers • Gwendolyn Thomas
Arlene Edwards • Louisa McCullough

ZAMI's primary mission is to empower and affirm the lives of lesbians of color through advocacy, leadership development, scholarship funds, discussions, social activities, outreach and education.

404.370.0920 | zami@zami.org
ZAMI, Inc. | P.O. Box 2502 | Decatur | GA | 30031

ONE PUBLICATION INC
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30333
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ZAMI

Business
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POLITICS 101

THE CONTROVERSY :

THE CHANGING FACES OF ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

CAUSED BY THE FIRST LESBIAN ELECTED

By Aida Rentas

I have carefully chosen the words I use to discuss this important and yet controversial topic. This election saw us put a lesbian for the first time in Georgia on the City Council. As a community this should have felt like a victory for all. Not so.... This time we were not divided by race, class or even religion. Unbelieveable as it may seem, we were divided by should we vote for a straight allie or one of our own. Many in the community knew and loved Mary Davis while few knew who Cathy woolard was. This was complicated more by the fact that our own local paper reported the news but also endorsed candidates.

So, why is this imortant to us? Having representation that is aware of our needs and can lobby for us at that level is just a crack in the door, but an opening just the same. Let us stay informed on what issues are being looked at. Call Cathy and let her know what bill we would like to see her introduce. Yes, introduce, we can take a pro-active position as oppose to a reactive position.

POLITICA

LA CONTRAVERSIA:

LAS CARAS CAMBIANEN EL COUNCIL DE ATLANTA

CAUSADA POR LA PRIMERA LESBIANA ELEJIDA.

Escojo muy precisas mis palabras para hablar de los importantisimos resultados de las elecciones de este noviembre pasado. Las elecciones nos vio poner por primera vez una lesbiana en la silla de el council de lcuidad en Georgia. Como una communidad esto nos devio hacernos sentir bien... Pero no, asi no es. Esta vez no nos divide la raza ni la clase social, ni si tan siquiera la religion. Increable como parece, nos divide que votamos por una lesiana en ves de or una amiga no lesbiana . Muchos en la communidad conocian y querian a Mary Davis, mientras pocos conocen a Cathy Woolard. Esto fue mas complicado todavia por el periodico local que en vez de reportar las noticias tambien apoyo a ciertos candidados.

Porque esto es importante para nosotros?Tener representacion que conoce nuestras necesidades es un pies en la puerto, y pues, algo es algo. Vamos a mantenernos informado en cuanto a que issues estan mirando, y

PUBLISHER'S PAGE

"Be the Change You Are Trying To Create."
-Ghandi

It is February, Black History Month, Valentine's Day, and Zami having a An event where lesbians gather to share, Learn and grow. I am particularly pleased that I was invited to participate. I made this sample up last night, in the Wee hours of the morning, because I felt Nothing would be as powerful, as showing you what we could do if we had a magazine whose contents were dictated by us. The grammar might not be correct, the punctuations probably are all wrong, but the idea is this. With a good editor, some writers, and a handful of advertisers we could begin creating a place where Atlanta people of color LGBT community could see themselves in the stories told. We could have features written about our needs, desires, Hobbies, sheroes, etc. Dream with me and help make this a reality. My commitment is to keep learning, researching, and working hard to give you the best, for you deserve this.

In order to facilitate People of Color entrepreneurial expansion, there is a need to share the visions of accomplished luminaries, as well as support those rising to become such, and to maintain an economic stronghold. I see this gathering today as a big step in That direction and want to congratulate Zami for this great undertaking. Peace and love.

Aida Rentas

CREDITS

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Aida M. Rentas

PRESIDENT,CFO
Aida M. Rentas

COPY EDITOR
This Could Be You

DIRECTOR OF ART & PRODUCTION
No One Yet

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Nayck Feliz
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Edie Cohen
Rasika Weinstein

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ADVERTISING SALES
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Atlanta, Georgia 30333

HOW "ONE" WILL BENEFIT GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH OF COLOR

"ONE" will provide GLT youth of color with continuous exposure to positive role models from the **GLT Latino, African-American, Asian** and other third world communities.
It is the goal of the publication to be a source of *empowerment, enlightenment* and *entertainment* for **GLT** youth of color.

EMPOWERMENT

1. The youth of color will be empowered by **"ONE"** because the publication, (through our **"FOR YOUTH" Section**,) will provide our youth with a venue to voice their opinions and concerns through a medium that will reach, not only their peers, but the community as a whole. The **"FOR YOUTH" Section** will be featured in each issue of **"ONE",** and will contain information on events, news, organizations and individuals of interest and importance to GLT youth of color. For this section **"ONE"** will solicted a large participation from GLT youth of color .
2. The magazine also has plans to offer an internship program for young Writers, Artist, Editors, etc..

ENLIGHTENMENT

1. GLT youth of color will frequently participate in the **"1 on 1"** section of the magazine. This section will be a dialogue, (on a single topic), between **two** individuals or groups from different sectors of the community This will broaden the youth experience in interacting with people of different cultures, ages, etc. and also create an avenue of exchange of ideas between the youth and other groups in the community
2. "ONE" plans to present a series of community events, one of these events will be an annual **youth summit** for youth of color to come together and reveiw and examine the issues and concerns they've expressed in the **"FOR YOUTH"** section of the magazine.

ENTERTAINMENT

1. GLT youth of color will be entertained each month by the contents of the entire magazine, but especially, by fact that for the first time in the history of a GLT publication they will have an ongoing section devoted entirely to them and their concerns.

Having access to a publication in which they can see and explore issues about themselves will have and ongoing impact on how GLT youth of color, not only, veiw themselves but the world.

BEFORE INDIGO ARTS

By Aida Rentas

I remember not so long ago wondering where to go for some R&R in this here Atlanta. I dreamt of a place where we could sit and talk and actually hear ourselves. This place would have art that represented me and my ethnicity and at the same time would be exciting.

Out of fustration and no other choice, I would wonder out on a Wednesday night to go to The Otherside, as Wednesday is People of Color night. After maybe one drink and trying to talk over the blare of the loudspeaker, I would opt to go to Denny's for some coffee.

One day I received a phone call from a friend to try to get an ad for my magazine from Indigo Art. Who? I soon drove over to the address given me to find out what this was all about. I met with Kathy and she was the back cover of my Mock Up for the magazine. Since then not only do I feel I have a new couple of friends, but now on a Sunday night I can plan to amber on down to hear some good jazz singing .

On a recent Friday night I went to see a one woman show that I could not believe was being held in this space. Slowly it is becoming the heartbeat of our Lesbian and Gay community. Let us make sure we financially support this wonderful space with our business so that it doesn't become just another closed business. We need to say Thank You with our financial support and volunteering wouldn't hurt. I'm sure there is much to be done and little time to do it.

You and your significant other are cordially invited to an Intimate Valentine's Affair

February 14th @ 7:00 PM.

Candlelight Dinner for 2
Eclectic Cuisine
Wine and Roses
Live Entertainment
Romantic Atmosphere
-Womyn Only-

$60 per Couple
Limited Sitting
Tickets must be purchased in Advance by: February 8th

Event Date: February 14,1998

"We will make this a night the Two of you will never forget"

INDIGO ARTS
GALLERY PLAYHOUSE
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Atlanta, Ga. 30307
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Major Credit Card Accepted

ALBITA

On Albita's second Crescent Moon/Epic release, DICEN QUE... (THEY SAY...), the Havana-born singer has a mission: to perform authentic Cuban music in a contemporary framework. Produced by Albita Rodriguez with her musical director Julia Sierra, Dicen Que... features mostly Albita's original compositions and was recorded live in the studio, without sequencers and other high-tech studio equipment. Many of the songs were completed in a single take.

Albita finds inspiration for her songs in everything and anything, but notes that an important recent influence was changing countries; she has been in the United States since 1993. "When you begin a new life, you start accumulating information and new influences. You don't know exactly where it will lead you and what it will lead you to produce," Albita explains. On Dicen Que..., Albita essentially tried to mix various types of Cuban musics, and has created a unique sound in the process. She notes that in addition to the music itself, Cubans have a unique way of speaking, using specific vocabulary and phrases. "Cuban is different from Spanish. This is part of our unique identity and allows us to express our view in our own sensibility and words."

Albita feels a particular closeness with the *guajiro* songs on Dicen Que... Her parents were well-known *punto guajiro* (acoustic Cuban country music) singers and she claims that her first living memory is seeing a *guiro*, *clave* and *bongo* (Cuban percussion instruments).

"'Habra Musica Guajira (There Will Be Guajira Music)' was the title track on my first Cuban release (in 1988, on the state-owned Egrem label) and remains very important in my battle to play authentic Cuban music. 'Son de Tahurete' is also special for me. This style of *son* goes back to the period of Cuba's fight for independence against Spain, and originated in Province Oriente in the middle of the mountains." (*Son* combines African and European elements, transforms them into a polyrhythmic indigenous musical art form, and is the basis of today's *salsa*.)

"Hoy No Voy A Trabajar (Today I'm Not Going to Work)" is noteworthy for the playing of Cuban jazz great Arturo Sandoval on trumpet. Albita's group opened for Sandoval on her very first US tour, and the two expatriate musicians struck up a friendship. "I needed a person who could play this *descarga* ("jam" song style) very aggressively," Albita explains. "Arturo is the only one who has the rhythm of the *Carnival Cubano*, who could play with this flavor and technique." "Hoy No Voy A Trabajar" mixes *conga* (a standard Afro-Cuban rhythm) with *descarga*. About the lyrics, Albita jokes, "Could you imagine if my conga player decided *he* didn't want to work today? I'd be incapacitated..."

In "Mirame, Rozame, Amame (Look At Me, Brush Against Me, Love Me)" Albita subtly incorporates Baroque musical stylings without losing the sense of Cuban dance and rhythm. Lyrically, it is one of the album's most provocative cuts. Albita says that such lyrics as *"I want you to kiss me/but I don't want witnesses"* suggest that "love is mysterious, and that concealing it in the beginning makes it more enjoyable." Towards the end of the song, Albita sings *"If women*

6

(Continued on Page 7

played tres/They would overrule the men" as Julia Sierra breaks into a exquisite *tres* solo. (The *tres* is a sweet-sounding Cuban guitar that has three sets of two strings.) "Corazon Rumbero" deals with themes from Santeria, that fusion of Catholic and Yoruba religions which comprises one of the richest and most fascinating strands in Cuban culture.

Most of Albita's group have been together for six years and played together in Cuba and Colombia, before moving to Miami. Julia Sierra has been Albita's musical director for six years, and wrote two songs on Dicen Que...; she is also one of the only female *tres* players in the world. Albita describes Julia as "a unique musician with a great capacity for understanding who captures where I want to go musically...I am proud to have her as my closest friend as well as my musical director."

Flautist Mercedes Abal has been performing with Albita for eleven years. Pianist Vivianna Pintado and bassist Mandy Gonzalez are also long-time members who came to the US with Albita. Newcomers to the group on this album include trumpeter Eduardo Leal, trombonist Jorge Dobal, and percussionists Fernando Pina and Ramon Rodriguez. All of the musicians are Cuban, and Albita explains that when she met them, she was impressed by them both musically and by what kind of people they are.

Albita, who credits her parents as her greatest musical influence, began playing when she was 15 and first learned *punto guajiro*. By the time she was 19, Albita was the youngest performer on Cuba's musical television showcase "Palmas y Canas," which is akin in spirit to the United States' "Hee-Haw." Albita thrived in Cuba, playing Havana's top tourist hotels and nightclubs including the famed Tropicana. Her first album, Habra Musica Guajira, was released in 1988. In 1991 Albita was offered a major recording contract in Colombia, for which the Cuban government allowed her to live abroad, but continued to take a huge percentage of her earnings. The singer recorded two more albums which sold widely throughout Latin America.

In April 1993, at the height of their pre-US career, Albita y Su Grupo decided to break away. They set up a visit to a recording studio in Mexico, went to the US border, and casually walked over the bridge into El Paso, thus defecting to the United States. Albita settled in Miami, where her performances in a tiny Cuban restaurant called Centro Vasco soon were attracting enthusiastic fans like Madonna (who changed the date of her birthday party in order to be able to have Albita perform at the bash), Paloma Picasso, Angelica Huston, Marisa Tomei, Rosie O'Donnell, Cindy Crawford and Gianni Versace.

Among those fans were Emilio and Gloria Estefan, whose Epic-distributed Crescent Moon label released Albita's US debut album, No Se Parece a Nada (Unlike Anything Else), in June 1995. The singer and her group commenced touring the world, playing sold-out shows in the United States, Spain, Panama, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Puerto Rico. Among the high points were a performance at the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland; a show in Spain with the Pyrenees Mountains as a backdrop; and festival appearances with Gilberto Gil and Oscar d'Leon.

As to her much commented-upon androgynous image of tailored suits and slicked-back hair, Albita remarks that "by the second song of my performances, people aren't focusing on what I

look like, but are listening to the music." She adds: "I am definitely not the typical Latin woman. I'm blond and I'm thin and that's not a typical Latin look. I like to wear comfortable clothes when I perform." She recognizes that "people need to find a reference point to express their impressions of me."

The power of Albita's music was the reference point for the press, which had nothing but the highest praise for No Se Parece a Nada and the singer's incendiary live shows. "Her music is a complete package of vocal skill, poetic beauty and outstanding playing by a group of young Cuban musicians," The Los Angeles Times wrote. New York Magazine added: "[T]his 33-year-old is hardly all flash...the *punto guajira* songs on No Se Parece a Nada smoothly blend rock, jazz, and more traditional folk elements into a steamy conga-driven salsa that explodes on impact." Paper described the singer as "part Beny More, part Marlene Dietrich," and noted that "from her first song, Albita shatters the room with the power of her rich, earthy voice."

Dicen Que... chronicles Albita's impressive growth as a singer, songwriter, and musician. She continues to fulfill her artistic dream: "a Cuban dream," she vows, "to carry my musical culture to the world."

MACCIE RODRIGUEZ

A Latin k. d. lang: *The singer unleashes her passionate sound at a party in Miami*

POLITICS 101

THE CONTROVERSY :

THE CHANGING FACES OF ATLANTA CITY COUNCIL

CAUSED BY THE FIRST LESBIAN ELECTED

By Aida Rentas

I have carefully chosen the words I use to discuss this important and yet controversial topic. This election saw us put a lesbian for the first time in Georgia on the City Council. As a community this should have felt like a victory for all. Not so.... This time we were not divided by race, class or even religion. Unbelieveable as it may seem, we were divided by should we vote for a straight allie or one of our own. Many in the community knew and loved Mary Davis while few knew who Cathy woolard was. This was complicated more by the fact that our own local paper reported the news but also endorsed candidates.

So, why is this imortant to us? Having representation that is aware of our needs and can lobby for us at that level is just a crack in the door, but an opening just the same. Let us stay informed on what issues are being looked at. Call Cathy and let her know what bill we would like to see her introduce. Yes, introduce, we can take a pro-active position as oppose to a reactive position.

POLITICA

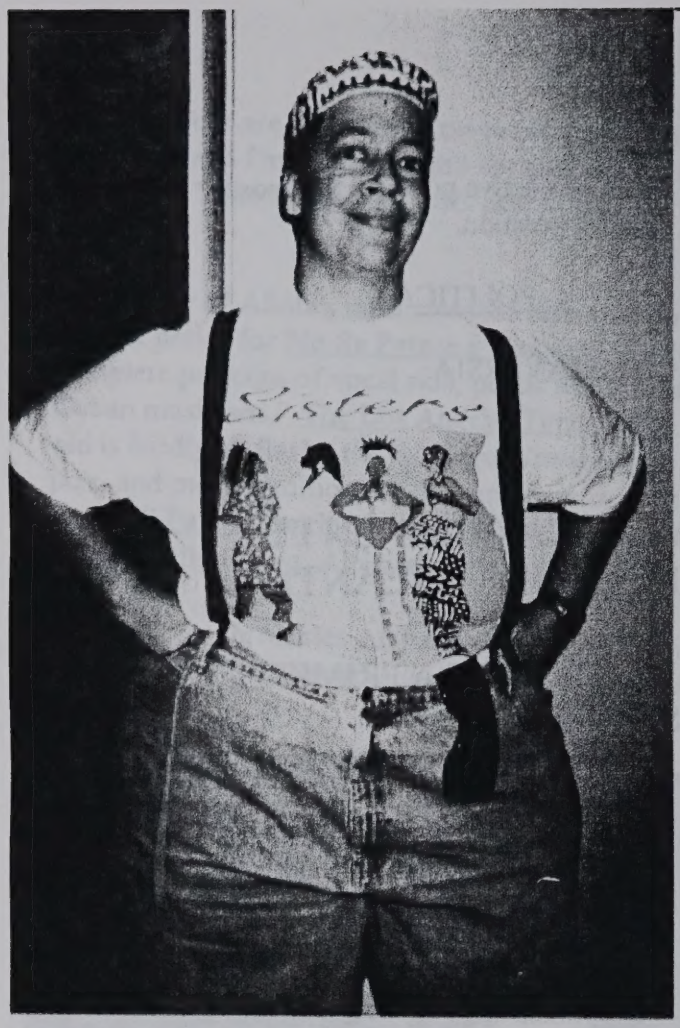
LA CONTRAVERSIA:

LAS CARAS CAMBIANEN EL COUNCIL DE ATLANTA

CAUSADA POR LA PRIMERA LESBIANA ELEJIDA.

Escojo muy precisas mis palabras para hablar de los importantisimos resultados de las elecciones de este noviembre pasado. Las elecciones nos vio poner por primera vez una lesbiana en la silla de el council de lcuidad en Georgia. Como una communidad esto nos devio hacernos sentir bien... Pero no, asi no es. Esta vez no nos divide la raza ni la clase social, ni si tan siquiera la religion. Increable como parece, nos divide que votamos por una lesiana en ves de or una amiga no lesbiana . Muchos en la communidad conocian y querian a Mary Davis, mientras pocos conocen a Cathy Woolard. Esto fue mas complicado todavia por el periodico local que en vez de reportar las noticias tambien apoyo a ciertos candidados.

Porque esto es importante para nosotros?Tener representacion que conoce nuestras necesidades es un pies en la puerto, y pues, algo es algo. Vamos a mantenernos informado en cuanto a que issues estan mirando, y



Check it out "Sisters" ....Pat Hussein

Donna Collier videotaping at Highlander

FOCUS: LESBIANS

"Cassandra" performing at X-mas party

And.....

Drag

Queen

→

Kathy Williams at Latinos En Accion Dance

EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA!

--> REPORT: ALMODOVAR, GAULTIER DETAINED IN CUBAN GAY CRACKDOWN

Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodovar and French designer Jean Paul Gaultier were among the several hundred people detained in the Aug. 23 raid on Havana's most popular gay discotheque, El Periquiton, according to an unconfirmed report from the Cuban Independent Press Agency.

Cuban customers of the club were fined 30 pesos (US$1) and released from a police station the next day. Two busloads of foreigners were transported to immigration authorities for a document check.

Marianela Ferriol, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Relations, said police targeted the disco because prostitutes, pimps and minors were present.

Revolutionary National Police head Angel Diaz told Radio Rebelde that the raid netted "prostitutes, pimps, some underage youth and various foreigners."

But sources in Havana and Miami say the raid was, in fact, the latest move in a widescale crackdown on all things gay.

"Gays are falling under the thumb of the government," said Alberto Montano of Miami's Cuba AIDS Project. The government "needs to keep everyone in their place and these [private house-

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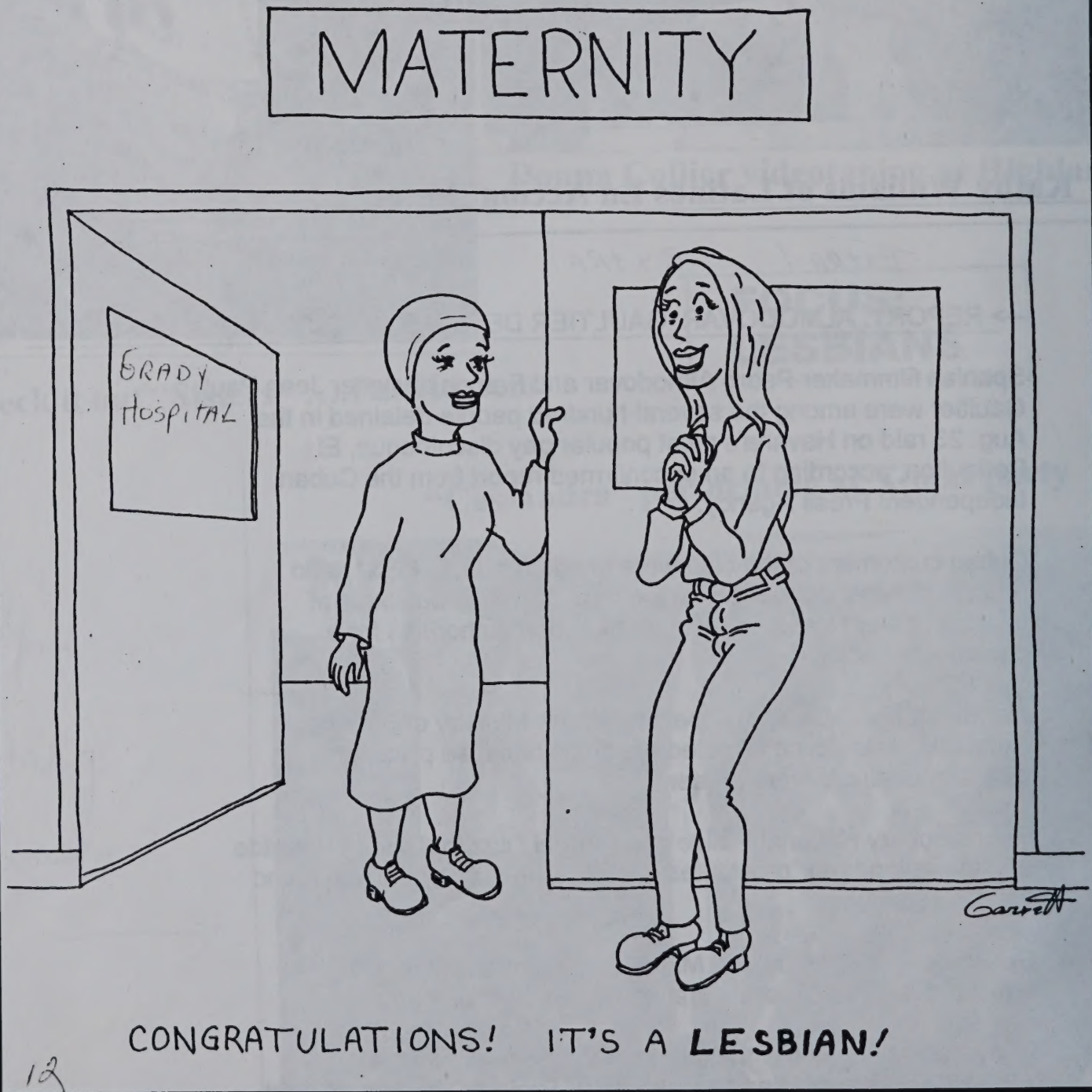


Continued ... Almodovar

discos] had become a place of freedom for gays. El Periquiton was the ... gay Tropicana, and drew a lot of foreigners."

According to Miami's El Nuevo Herald, several of the dozen or so other private gay clubs in Havana also have been raided, including Mi Cayito, Jurassic Park and Fiestas de Serrano y Correa.

Several government nightclubs whose customers were predominantly homosexual also have been raided, including La Red, El Karachi and El Joker, all located in the Vedado nightlife district. Since the raids, police have restricted entry at the official clubs to opposite-sex couples, sources said.

In addition, the Cuban Association of Gays and Lesbians, which formed in 1994, has been squashed and its members were taken into custody from their places of employment, El Nuevo Herald said.

"Homosexuals and transvestites are regularly detained by the police and accused of public scandal for which they can be condemned to three months in jail or a 500 peso fine," the newspaper said.

Article 303 of the Cuban Penal Code punishes "publicly manifested" homosexuality with up to one year in prison.

--> FIRST PRIDE PARADE IN HUNGARY {{pic sent}}

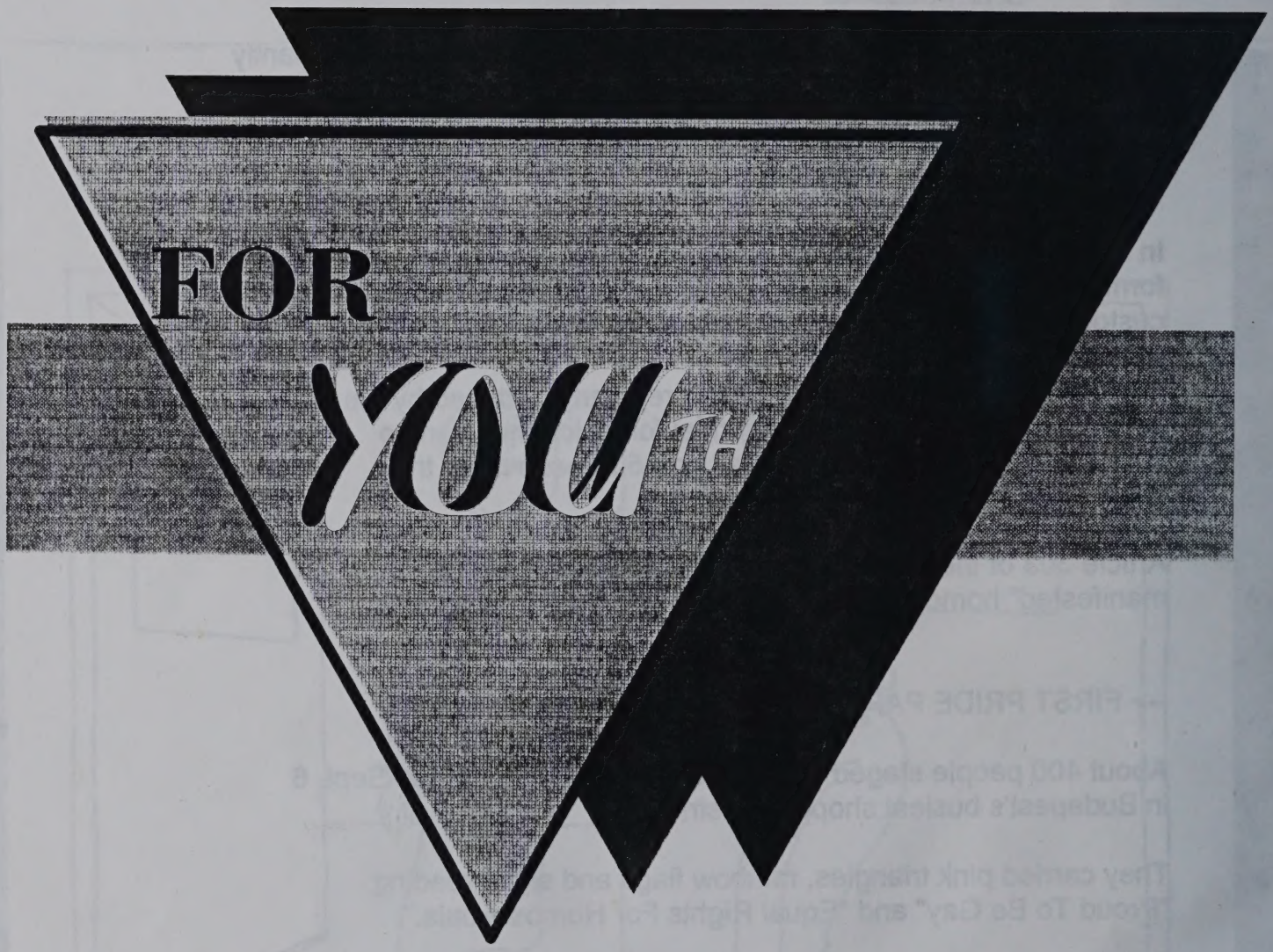
About 400 people staged Hungary's first gay-pride parade Sept. 6 in Budapest's busiest shopping district.

They carried pink triangles, rainbow flags and signs reading, "Proud To Be Gay" and "Equal Rights For Homosexuals."

Halfway through the two-kilometer march, the group stopped at Vorosmarty Square -- the traditional site for demonstrations in Budapest -- to hear a speech by Hungarian Radio's Balazs Palfi, one of the nation's few openly gay public figures.

Coming Soon!

A MONTHLY SECTION FEATURED IN "ONE" MAGAZINE



FOCUSING ON ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF GLT YOUTH OF COLOR

Look for it